

PETER COOPER CORPORATION NEW YORK



EPA REGION 2
CONGRESSIONAL DIST. 31
Cattaraugus County
Dayton

Other Name: Markhams

EPA ID# NYD980592547

Site Description

The Peter Cooper Corporation (PCC) site is situated within a 106-acre, wooded property in a flat-lying, rural farmland area near the hamlet of Markhams in the Town of Dayton, Cattaraugus County, New York. The site is bounded by railroad tracks to the southeast, a forested wetland to the northwest and the remainder of the wooded property to the northeast and southwest. The surrounding vicinity consists mostly of farmland and meadows, with scattered wetland areas. The original corporation, including its name, assets, and liabilities, was purchased in August 1976 by Rousselot Gelatin Corporation and its parent, Rousselot, S.A. of Paris, France. The Rousselot Gelatin Corporation was renamed the Peter Cooper Corporation, which still owns the Markhams property.

PCC used the Markhams site for disposal of manufacturing residues from 1955 until 1971, when animal glue production ceased at their Gowanda plant. In 1971, PCC reported that the Markhams site was receiving vacuum filter sludge and cookhouse sludge directly from the Gowanda operation; they would receive those materials until the plant shut down in February 1971. In September 1971, a 15-acre disposal area was almost completely covered with waste. It was reported that approximately 9,600 tons of manufacturing residues had been placed at the site.

In addition to the manufacturing residues, PCC transferred approximately 38,600 tons of previously accumulated wastes from the Gowanda site to the Markhams site between August 1971 and late 1972. The action was conducted in compliance with a New York State Supreme Court Order, which required PCC to remove all or part of waste residue piles from the Gowanda site. At the Markhams site, PCC arranged the material into several waste piles approximately 20 feet high and covering a total of approximately 7 acres, mostly in the original disposal area. No disposal occurred at the Markhams site after 1971, and the disposal area has since revegetated.

The waste material has been shown to contain elevated levels of chromium, arsenic, zinc, and some organic compounds. Results also indicate a large area of contaminated soil outside the boundaries of the waste piles.

Site Responsibility: The site is currently being addressed through Federal and potentially responsible parties' actions.

NPL LISTING HISTORY

Proposed Date: 04/23/99

Final Listing NPL:02/4/00

Threats and Contaminants



Currently, the levels of arsenic, chromium and zinc detected in the soil and leachate where exposures could occur do not represent a public health concern. Much higher levels of contaminants are present, however, in the subsurface soil. Deterioration of the site cover could allow people to be exposed to higher levels of contaminants in the soil and leachate, and consequently, could pose a health concern in the future.



Cleanup Approach

The site is being addressed in a single long-term remedial phase focusing on cleanup of the entire site.



Response Action Status

Entire Site: EPA issued General Notice to eleven Respondents on July 13, 2000 offering them the opportunity to enter into an Administrative Order of Consent (AOC) for the performance of the Remedial Investigation/Feasibility Study (RI/FS) for the Markhams site. All Respondents which received general notice declined to enter into an AOC. Therefore, on September 27, 2000, EPA issued a Unilateral Administrative Order (UAO) ordering the PRPs to conduct the RI/FS. The UAO called for Respondents, the Wilhelm Enterprises Corporation (former owner/operator) and ten generators of hazardous substances that were disposed of at the Site to perform an RI/FS. The PRPs have complied with the UAO. The Remedial Investigation field work was initiated by the PRPs contractor on September 24, 2001. At the conclusion of the investigation, EPA will select a final cleanup remedy.

Cleanup Progress



Since adding the site to the NPL, EPA has performed a review of the available data collected and coordinated with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation in planning future activities. In addition, a UAO has been issued to eleven PRPs. Field work for the RI/FS began September 24, 2001. The second round of sampling is scheduled for April 2002.

Site Repository



All documents regarding this site are located at the USEPA Region II Record Center, 290 Broadway, 18th Floor, New York, New York, 10007-1866.